

Phil 130 – Philosophy and Literature

Section: 000

Professor Jordan Daniels
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Course Description and Objectives:

In this course, we will explore so-called “ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry,” and parse how this plays out in the forms, functions, and relations to truth that philosophy and literature come to bear. Crucial questions include: What is philosophy? What is truth? What is at stake in the distinction between form and content? With careful attention to the texts, we will discover what it means to read and write philosophically while pursuing these questions. This class should function as an introduction to these themes and to philosophical questions and methods more broadly.

Required Texts:

Homer, *The Odyssey*, (FSG), Robert Fitzgerald (Translator), ISBN-13: 9780374525743

Plato, *The Republic of Plato*, (Second Edition, Basic Books), Allan Bloom (Editor and Translator), ISBN-13: 9780465069347

Sophocles, *The Oedipus Plays of Sophocles: Oedipus the King; Oedipus at Colonus; Antigone*, Paul Roche (Translator), ISBN-13: 9780452011670

Nietzsche, *Nietzsche: The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, (Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy), Raymond Geuss and Ronald Speirs (Editors), ISBN-13: 9780521639873

It is crucial that you have these translations (and editions), and the additional texts will be available through Blackboard or Course Reserves. You must bring the text to class. You may find these editions in the Emory bookstore, but there are also online sellers that might have less expensive versions. The library and ILLiad (interlibrary loan) are also excellent means to get these copies. **BRING THE TEXT TO CLASS.**

Course Requirements:

- 1. One Page Responses:** You will be asked to write responses--no more than one page, single spaced--that are due on the days noted on the syllabus. The assignments will be provided in class. The purpose of these responses is for you to practice a method of close, exegetical reading and interpretation of the texts. They are graded according to accuracy (4 points), organization (4 points) and depth (4 points).
- 2. Short Paper:** A short paper, between 3-4 pages, will be due on March 3. It will be graded according to accuracy (4 points), organization (4 points) and depth (4 points). You will also

be given the option to revise your short paper, and you are encouraged to meet with me to discuss your revision.

3. **Presentation:** In the final weeks of the semester, each students will present an artwork of your choosing for 20 minutes. Your analysis must relate to the framework of one of the philosophers we cover in this course. Further information will be passed out at a later date.

4. **Final Paper:** A final paper of 5-7 pages will be due online (via email) at the end of the term by 11:59 pm on April 28. The final paper may build on the ideas present your shorter papers. Prompts will be provided, but we can discuss if you have your own questions. This will be graded according to accuracy (3 points), organization (3 points), depth (3 points), and argument (3 points). We will discuss more in class.

5. **Participation:** Courteous engagement in class discussion is a big part of this course. Ask questions, respond to your peers, and be respectful.

6. **Attendance:** If you miss three classes (unexcused), your grade will go down one full letter.

Grades:

One pagers: 20%

Short Paper: 20%

Critical Thinking Module: P/F 20%

Final Presentation: 10%

Final Paper: 20%

Participation, Preparation, Attendance: 10%

If you need help with material or need to discuss your performance in the class, please email me or come to my office hours.

Students with Disabilities: Emory University complies with the regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and offers accommodations to students with disabilities. If you are in need of a classroom accommodation, please make an appointment with me to discuss this as soon as possible. All information will be held in the strictest confidence. <http://www.ods.emory.edu/students/index.html>

Technology in the Classroom: You are not allowed to use any electronic instrument during class, unless it is to accommodate a certified disability. Phones and laptops must be shut off and put away.

The syllabus and reading schedule might be revised throughout the course of this semester. Revised versions will be posted on Blackboard.

Reading Schedule:

January 12: Opening day

January 14: Homer, *The Odyssey*, 81-162

January 19: Homer, *The Odyssey*, 165-225

January 21: Thucydides, “The Mytilenian Debate” (212-223), “Pericles’ Funeral Oration” (143-151), “The Policy of Pericles” (156-164), pdfs

January 26: *The Republic*, Book I

January 28: *The Republic*, Book I **One Page Response due**

February 2: *The Republic*, Book II

February 4: *The Republic*, Book II

February 9: *The Republic*, Book III

February 11: *The Republic*, Book III

February 16: **No class**

February 18: *The Republic*, Book X **One Page Response due**

February 23: *The Republic*, Book X

February 25: Timothy O’Brien, “How to Tell a True War Story,” pdf

March 1: Sophocles, *Antigone*

March 3: Aristotle, *Poetics*, selections, pdf **Short Paper due at 11:59pm**

March 8: Spring Break

March 10: Spring Break

March 15: Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 13-36

March 17: Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 36-64

March 22: Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 64-104

March 24: Nietzsche, “An Attempt at Self-Criticism” (preface to *BoT*, 1-13), Euripides, *Cyclops*, pdf, **One Page Response due**

March 29: Rilke, selected poems, Kafka, “The Judgment,” pdfs

March 31: Dostoevsky, “The Grand Inquisitor”

April 5: Flannery O’Connor “A Good Man Is Hard to Find,” and “Good Country People,” pdfs

April 7: Presentations

April 12: Presentations

April 14: Presentations

April 19: Presentations

April 21: Presentations

Final Paper is due April 28, at 11:59pm.

Philosophy and Literature
Prof. Daniels
Spring 2019

Final Presentation Assignment

For your presentation, choose a work of literature or an artwork; you may choose a short story, a play, a song, a movie, or a poem. If you choose a longer piece, like a movie or play, it is possible for you to pair up with a partner and combine presenting times (check with me). Depending on the medium you choose, it would be best if you find a pdf or link we can send around to the class two days before your presentation.

All students must run their selected artwork by me by March 31, by email or in person. Let me know how you would like to distribute materials to the class ahead of time, or if you want to pass it out in class. (2 points)

It is not required to run a draft by me, but it is encouraged. Also, all are invited to meet with me to discuss your selected work, either in office hours or by appointment.

Requirements for the presentation (40 points total):

First, frame and present your artwork to the class. Provide an overview of the piece, and depending on the length, we can read through the text or listen in class. (Keep in mind we can play silent video, and we can bring in a speaker for music.) This should take around 5 minutes. (3 points)

Second, present your analysis and interpretation of your work. Why is this work meaningful? What does it present to us/what does it do/what does it mean? How does it accomplish this? Carefully defend your positions with well-chosen arguments, and guide the class through the text/piece with your analysis. (15 points)

Third, choose one philosopher we have read this semester, and use an element of their philosophy to expand your reading of the piece. How would they understand the work? Either compare and contrast the philosopher's claims with what you take to be the achievements of the work, or use their position as one mode of interpretation, and then evaluate such an interpretation against your own. Make sure to cite the philosopher's text. (15 points)

Finally, be sure to have at least **three discussion questions** for the class to ensure there is participation. (5 points)

Your presentation should be around 20 minutes total, as the first 5 minutes are for showing us or setting up the work.

Please speak loudly and clearly, and please do not just read a paper. Rather, prepare an oral presentation. You may use notes if you need them, but do not just read a prepared text.